

With this scholarship, Access Services is providing a different kind of mobility...

access

Since its founding in 1994, Access has operated as a coordinated paratransit system that provides seamless Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit on behalf of 45 fixed-route member agencies. Paratransit is an alternative mode of accessible, flexible passenger transportation that does not follow fixed routes or schedules, typically using accessible mini-vans and taxis. Using a coordinated operating structure, Access provides enormous benefit to paratransit customers, giving them transfer-free paratransit services throughout the Los Angeles basin. And that's no small mandate. Access provides more than 3.4 million trips per year (11,000 trips on average weekday) for more than 163,000 qualified disabled riders throughout most of Los Angeles County. And it provides services virtually around the clock throughout most of its service area. That's no small amount of freedom for a large number of people. According to Access executive director Andre Colaiace, "Access is proud to provide independence, freedom, and equal access to people with disabilities." But that's not all they do.

While Access helps society through its work, it wanted to expand that mandate and decided to help LA County in another way—through WTS-LA. This year, Access created the \$5,000 Access Services WTS-LA Scholarship. Open to academically successful undergraduate students, the Access scholarship inspires students who display the same kind of caring, passion, and altruism that defines Access itself. Again, according to Mr. Colaiace, "Our goal is to help deserving students who want to continue their education and give back to society. The transportation field needs a highly educated workforce and Access is proud to contribute in partnership with WTS-LA." And this year, the inaugural award goes to a most deserving student, Clare Blackwell.